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November 19, 2008

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"I am honored to be asked by my colleagues in the Blue Dog Coalition to be part of our leadership," said Rep. Melancon. "The Blue Dogs have been a constant voice for fiscal responsibility and moderation in Congress, reminding our elected leaders of their duty to the taxpayers of this country. In the next Congress, I look forward to working with the other Blue Dog co-chairs to strengthen the influence of our coalition and push our leadership and the new administration in a centrist and fiscally responsible direction as we rebuild our economy."

Rep. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin (D-SD) will serve as Blue Dog Co-Chair for Administration and Rep. Baron Hill (D-IN) will serve as Co-Chair for Policy.

"This very capable and experienced group of co-chairs will be an effective leadership team ensuring that the Blue Dogs continue to be a strong, moderating force in the 111th Congress," said Congressman Mike Ross (D-AR), current Blue Dog Co-Chair for Communications. "It is important, now more than ever, that we work together in a bipartisan fashion to develop a long term plan to balance the budget and rebuild the economy. With our new leadership team in place, the Blue Dogs are prepared to take the necessary steps to accomplish these goals."

As longtime fiscal hawks, the Blue Dogs will continue to play a significant role as Congress and the administration work together to put the country back on a path to economic sustainability. The new slate of leaders will succeed Rep. Allen Boyd (D-FL), Rep. Dennis Moore (D-KS) and Rep. Mike Ross (D-AR) in their posts as co-chairs of the Coalition. Blue Dog by-laws require that the leadership team alternate every session of Congress so that the group's focus continues to be the advancement of the larger Blue Dog movement rather than about a few individuals or personalities.

The fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition was formed in 1995 with the goal of representing the center of the House of Representatives and appealing to the mainstream values of the American public. The Blue Dogs are dedicated to a core set of beliefs that transcend partisan politics, including a deep commitment to the financial stability and national security of the United States. Currently there are 49 members of the Blue Dog Coalition. For more information, visit the Blue Dog Website at <http://www.house.gov/ross/BlueDogs/>.

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